

***Carex eleocharis* (Bailey)**
narrow-leaved sedge
Cyperaceae (Sedge Family)

Status: State Sensitive
Rank: G5S1

General Description: Slender sedge with brownish, slender rhizomes. The stiff, smooth culms reach up to 6 in. (15 cm) tall and arise singly or few together. The very narrow leaves, often inrolled or channeled, are clustered near the base and usually shorter than the flowering stems. The thin stems are erect and 2-8 in. (0.5-2 dm) tall with several spikes that are densely clustered into an egg-shaped head. Scales of the perigynia are thin and brownish with a conspicuous midrib. The perigynia are elliptic to ovate and finely toothed along the prominent marginal nerves, otherwise ventrally nerveless. The beak of the perigynium is short and ranges from clefted to bidentate with 2 stigmas. The lens-shaped achene is closely enveloped by the perigynium.

Identification Tips: Very narrow leaves, 1/64-1/16 of an in. (½ -1¼ mm) wide. The spikes are clustered in a head, usually with male flowers near the tip and female flowers near the base. The perigynia are finely serrulate along the distinct marginal veins. As with all sedges, positive identification requires the use of a technical key.

Phenology: Flowers May through July.

Range: The species is circumpolar from the Northern Great Plains, eventually becoming scattered in the west. It reaches south to Arizona, California, and New Mexico, and is also known to occur in Eurasia. In Washington, the species is disjunct in Okanogan County.

Habitat: The taxon occurs in dry to somewhat moist plains and foothills and open, gravelly sites that dry in the summer. It is also reported from grassy areas in low to moderately high elevations in the mountains, but not above timberline.

Ecology: Unlike most sedges, *C. eleocharis* grows in dry areas. Weedy diffuse knapweed (*Centaurea diffusa*) has been known to invade populations.

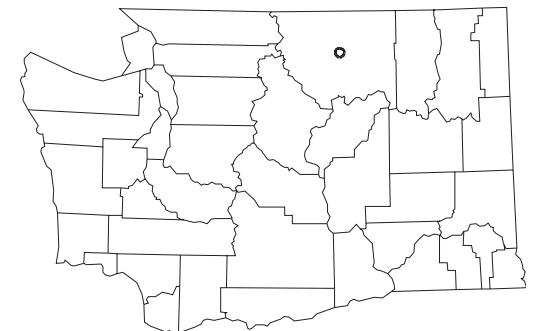
State Status Comments: There is one verified population in the state. The known site is located on private land; therefore, registry should be considered.

Carex eleocharis
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Known distribution of
Carex eleocharis
in Washington



● Current (1980+)
○ Historic (older than 1980)

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Inventory Needs: Additional inventory is needed.

Threats and Management Concerns: Road construction and herbicide spraying are potential threats.

Comments: The species may also be known as *Carex stenophylla*, as it is listed in Hitchcock.

References:

Hitchcock, C.L., A. Cronquist, M. Ownbey, and J.W. Thompson. 1964. *Vascular Plants of the Pacific Northwest, Part 1: Vascular Cryptogams Gymnosperms and Monocotyledons*. University of Washington Press, Seattle. 914 pp.

Taylor, T.M.C. 1983. *The Sedge Family of British Columbia*. Handbook No. 43, British Columbia Provincial Museum. Victoria, B.C. 375pp

Washington Natural Heritage Program. 1981. *An Illustrated Guide to the Endangered, Threatened and Sensitive Vascular Plants of Washington*. Washington State Department of Natural Resources. 328 pp.